

our children so that they truly understand how the environment functions.

Over the last few years environmental education has been criticized for being one-sided and heavy-handed. People have accused environmental advocates of trying to brainwash children and of pushing an environmental agenda that is not supported by the facts or by science. They also accuse the Federal Government of setting one curriculum standard and forcing all schools to subscribe to their views. This is not how these two environmental education programs have worked, and I have taken specific steps to ensure that they never work this way. In fact, this legislation will prevent this from happening.

The programs that this act reauthorizes have targeted the majority of their grants at the local level, allowing the teachers in our community schools to design their environmental programs to teach our children, and this is where the decisions should be made. In addition, the grants have not been used for advocacy or to lobby the Government, as other grant programs have been accused of doing.

This legislation accomplishes two important functions. First, it cleans up the current law to make the programs run more efficiently. And second, it places two very important safeguards in the program to ensure its integrity in the future.

I have placed in this bill language to ensure that the EPA programs are balanced and scientifically sound. It is important that environmental education is presented in an unbiased and balanced manner. The personal values and prejudices of the educators should not be instilled in our children. Instead we must teach them to think for themselves after they have been presented with all of the facts and information. Environmental ideas must be grounded in sound science and not emotional bias. While these programs have not been guilty of this in the past, this is an important safeguard to protect the future of environmental education.

Second, I have included language which prohibits any of the funds to be used for lobbying efforts. While these programs have not used the grant process to lobby the Government, there are other programs which have been accused of this and this language will ensure that this program never becomes a vehicle for the executive branch to lobby Congress.

This bill also makes a number of housekeeping changes to the programs which are supported by both the EPA and the Education Foundation which will both streamline and programs and make them more efficient.

The grants that have been awarded under this program have gone to a number of local groups. In Oklahoma alone such organizations as the Stillwater 4-H Foundation; Roosevelt Elementary School in Norman, OK; Oklahoma State University; the Kaw Nation of Oklahoma; and the Osage Coun-

ty Oklahoma Conservation District have received grants for environmental education under these programs.

This is an important piece of legislation, and I hope both the Senate and the House can act quickly to reauthorize these programs.

MEDICAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I think that the senior Senator from Texas articulated the MSA environment that we are in right now with the health bill in a very accurate way. But I believe that he overlooked one thing. I agree with him that we have a system that has a built-in disincentive to save or to get services, medical services and health care services, that would be less expensive. I am not any different than anyone else. I suggest that you are probably the same way, Mr. President. Once you pay your deductible and you are in the course of a year, you are going to go out and get any kind of health services that you need if it does not cost you anything. So you have something built into the system.

I cannot think of any other service or product in America where you would have a system built in that encourages you to pay more. I have heard some percentages of savings ranging between 40 and 60 percent if we could have MSA's.

But the one thing the Senator from Texas did not mention was that it also provides another benefit to those individuals because, if someone is between jobs or if someone gets fired from a job, this offers portability. It is a fund that can be drawn upon, or, if there is a catastrophic illness, this can be used for that. It is just beyond me. I have not been able to think of one logical argument that the Senator from Massachusetts, Senator KENNEDY, had against MSA's. I could see perhaps some doctors objecting to it because, obviously, people are going to be more cost conscious and are not going to be getting services they do not need. Ironically, though, I am proud of the medical community. I have yet to have one doctor tell me that he did not want to have MSA's. They are not opposing it even though they are the only group I could think of who possibly would lose some financial advantage by a system going in place.

So I am hoping that we will be able to get this. I cannot believe that our entire health program is being held hostage just because of the medical savings account, something that benefits everyone—all Americans, young, old, rich, poor—everyone equally.

TROOPS IN BOSNIA

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I want to repeat something in perhaps a little bit of a different way that I mentioned yesterday because we talked about a lot of things on this floor that are very significant, such as our health delivery system and such as the deficit. But our

Nation's defense perhaps is the most significant subject that we could have to talk about.

I was so dismayed and shocked yesterday when I read what the President was saying through Secretary of Defense William Perry that we now are going to leave our troops over in Bosnia for a period longer than the 12 months that they agreed to.

I am on the Intelligence Committee and the Senate Armed Services Committee. I can tell you that at the time this happened, I could not believe that we were sending troops into a warring area with an exit strategy that was geared to time, 12 months, as opposed to events. I do not know of any time in history that this has been the case.

So during the October 17 Senate Armed Services Committee meeting and several other meetings, and on the floor, we talked about the fact that we did not believe it was going to be a 12-month operation. I asked specifically Secretary Perry, as well as other people asking him in the same meeting—one was Senator ROBB from Virginia and one was Senator BINGAMAN from New Mexico—"Are you absolutely committed to bringing the troops home in 12 months?" The answer was always, "Yes, we are committed." It was hard for me to believe that could be possible.

So I went over to the northeast sector of Bosnia where we were planning at that time to send our troops. When I got there and went up to the northeast sector, finding out no other American had been up there, I found out from General Haukland, from Norway, who was in charge of the U.N. troops of that sector, that, in fact, it was laughable.

I said, "Are you aware that our troops are coming back in 12 months?" He said, "You mean in 12 years?" That is when he drew this analogy, when he said putting the troops in there is like putting your hand in water, and you leave it there for 12 months and take it out and nothing has changed; it is still there.

So we are making a longer term commitment than the President of the United States promised the American people. I can tell you right now, I stood right here on December 13 of last year when we had the resolution of disapproval that was authored by the junior Senator from Texas and myself, Senator HUTCHISON and myself. We lacked four votes of passing a resolution of disapproval. Mr. President, we would have had those four votes and many more if the American people had known, and if the Senators in this Chamber had known, that it was going to be a long-term proposition.

Right now it does look like it is open-ended. We could talk about the cost of it, we could talk about the mission, but the point is, they told us something that they knew was not true on December 13, at the time they passed the program to send American troops over into an area we have no vital security interest in.